Procurement Considerations for Explosive Detection Equipment

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The following issues should be considered, and researched if applicable, prior to the purchase of an item of equipment. The list is not intended to be all-inclusive but may be viewed as a guideline as to what to look for when taking the first step in the procurement process. For further information please refer to Explosive Detection Equipment at "atfp.nfesc.navy.mil"

First, Develop a Concept of Operations

- Decide who will operate and maintain the equipment.
- Where it will be deployed and stored?
- How the equipment will be used?
- Who will respond to and resolve alarms?
- What threats are to be countered? Contact your local intelligence agency for information.
- How much space is required to operate and store the equipment?

Think About Budgeting

- Determine the costs associated with the new equipment: Consider initial investment; unit life expectancy; set up, maintenance, overhead, and disposal costs; labor hours; and training.

Study Manufacturer's Equipment Specifications

When purchasing equipment you need to ask if the product encompasses all the requirements needed to perform the activity. Study the product specifications to find:

- Power requirements.
- Equipment operating parameters.
- Environmental requirements (e.g., air conditioning).
- Number of operators and their required skill level.
- Does the manufacturer provide training?

Research Equipment Life Expectancy/Model Changes

- Length of time unit has been produced.
- Length of time unit is expected to stay in production (is it the latest model?).

- Determine if the manufacturer routinely makes design changes to their technology or operating software.
- Determine if the unit needs to be sent back to the manufacturer for software upgrades.
- Life expectancy of unit.
- Disposal considerations.
- Presence of active source and the sources half- life.
- License requirements for use, shipment, and disposal.

Obtain Description and Pricing of Equipment

- Discounts (quantity, GSA schedule).
- Required logistic items (spare parts, consumables, manuals, service materials, etc.).
- Company provided services (training, warranty, etc.).
- Accessories that you might want or need to operate effectively within the concept of operations.

Customer Satisfaction

- Commercial and government references on complaints and reliability.
- Test data collected by an independent or government laboratory.
- Comparisons to competitors (cost, reliability, company response, etc.).

Warranty

- What does the warranty cover?
- Duration of the warranty.
- While equipment is being repaired will the manufacturer provide a "no cost" temporary replacement?

Maintenance

- Service material, tools, spares, and consumables required to operate the unit for one year after warranty.
- Percent of time, on average, unit can be expected to require daily/weekly maintenance.
- Desired training level for maintenance workers.
- Does manufacturer provide maintenance training?

Product Failure

- Manufacturer's response time:
- If production stops, length of time that spare parts and technical support will be available from manufacturer.
- Are units repaired on site or shipped back to manufacturer?
- The average time to repair a unit.
- Is there a manufacturer's representative in the local area?

Shipping

- Excess size or other reasons requiring special handling or methods, which might require increased shipping charges.
- Safety (e.g. HAZMAT).